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A Birthday Menu for Professor Tolkien

Nancy Smith

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Mythcon 51: The Mythic, the Fantastic, and the Alien

Albuquerque, New Mexico • Postponed to: July 30 – August 2, 2021



Abstract

As we all know, hobbits love celebrations, and occasions, and opportunities for feasting; and, beyond all else, they love birthdays. In the case of this particular author and gentleman, I am sure they would consider a seventy-fifth every bit as exciting as an eleventy-first.

A BIRTHDAY MENU FOR PROFESSOR TOLKIEN
by Nancy Smith

As we all know, hobbits love celebrations, and occasions, and opportunities for feasting; and, beyond all else, they love birthdays. In the case of this particular author and gentleman, I am sure they would consider a seventy-fifth every bit as exciting as an eleventy-first.

A proper hobbit Birthday Celebration ought to go on throughout an entire day, with intervals of games and songs and riddles between the courses. In these times, however, most of us have not got a whole day (alas!) to devote to such festivities, so I set forth here a menu only for a stout supper, the ingredients of which could certainly be found in any pantry or larder in Hobbiton:

Brown Celery Soup
Mackerel a la Meunière
Mutton Cutlets with Chestnuts
Cold Apricot Souffle
Smoked Haddock en Coquille

If, on the other hand, you discover that you and your friends comprise a company too numerous for such a formal repast, I suggest you toast the Professor's Diamond Jubilee with a spicy mulled wine accompanied by an assortment of delicious little cakes.

MULLED CLARET

1 bottle good claret	rind of one lemon
half that amount water	2 inches of cinnamon stick
1/3 cup sugar	grated nutmeg
4 cloves	

Put the water and sugar into a scrupulously clean saucepan with the spices and the thinly-peeled lemon rind. Bring slowly to the boil, add the claret, and boil up again. Pour into a jug and serve very hot. (Port may be used instead of claret.)

CINNAMON MACAROONS

½ lb. ground almonds	½ tsp. ground cinnamon
½ lb. icing sugar	some white of egg
2 tbsp. flour	
Icing: 3 tbsp. icing sugar, 1 tsp. flour, white of egg	

Sieve the flour, sugar, and cinnamon together and mix with ground almonds. Add gradually enough white of egg to form a stiff paste. Work with fingers until smooth and elastic. Roll out with a rolling-pin into an even strip. Prepare the icing, binding sugar and flour with a very little white of egg. Spread this smoothly over the almond paste with a wet knife and then cut into neat rectangles. Place these on a greased and floured sheet, and bake in a moderate oven 15 to 20 minutes until light brown in color and firm and crisp to the touch.

HONEY BRAN KNOBS

2 cups flour	2/3 cup milk
2/3 cups sugar	1/2 cup chopped nuts
1/2 cup brown sugar	2 eggs
1/2 cup honey	3/4 tsp. soda
1/2 cup raisins	1/2 tsp. salt
2 1/2 cups bran	1 tsp. baking powder
1 tsp. vanilla	1 tsp. cinnamon

Sieve together the flour, baking powder, cinnamon, and salt. Melt the butter, add the sugar, honey, and eggs, mixing together in a bowl. Dissolve the soda in the milk, then add the sifted dry ingredients alternately with the milk to the mixture in the bowl. Stir in the raisins, nuts, bran, and vanilla. Mix well, then drop by teaspoonfuls onto a well-greased cookie sheet. Bake ten minutes in a fairly hot oven.

SEED-CAKES (reprinted by permission of the author from Diplomat magazine, October 1966)

2 eggs	scant 1/2 cup milk
1/2 tsp. almond flavoring	at least 1 tsp. caraway seeds
3/4 cup sugar	a little finely grated lemon rind
1 cup flour	some slivered almonds
1 tsp. baking powder	(optional) some candied fruit peel
pinch of salt	powdered sugar
1 tbsp. butter	

Beat the eggs with the almond flavoring. Add sugar a little at a time. Sift together the flour, baking powder, and salt, and stir in. Melt the butter with the warm milk, add, and stir gently. Put in the caraway seeds, lemon rind, almonds, and, if you wish, fruit peel. Bake in a moderate oven for 25 minutes, using a buttered square pan. Since the batter is fairly thin, the seeds and nuts may sink to the bottom of the pan. Turn out the cake upside-down, sprinkle with powdered sugar when it has cooled, and cut it into squares.

LETTERS

To the Editor:

Dainis Bisenieks seems to believe (II,4) that because I call myself a liberal I must use "conservative" pejoratively, and that his saying that he'll comment on my article ("Social Philosophy in TLotR," II,2) point by point will somehow make his commentary complete and accurate. Neither belief is justified.

First, his definition of "conservative" coincides largely with the one I used. Second, his first paragraph reveals a total unfamiliarity with my next-to-last one.